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Modest Reply,

Humbly Offer'd,

As an Answer to, and Confutation of Seven  
ARGUMENTS Collected and Deliver'd by Mr.  
*Samuel Lawrence*, in a SERMON preach'd at his  
Meeting-House in *Namptwich*, Octob. 16th, 1691,  
whereby he would shew, That the Infants of Pro-  
fessing Christians ought to be Baptized :

WITH AN  
APPENDIX

OF  
Seven ARGUMENTS,  
SHEWING,

*That Infants ought not to be Baptized.*

WITH  
A SEASONABLE WORD to my Brethren of the  
Baptized Church, presented by the most Unworthiest  
of her Servants,

S. A.

Coloss. 2. 8. Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain  
deceit, after the traditions of men, after the rudiments of the world,  
and not after Christ.

Jude 3. Contend earnestly for the faith, once delivered to the saints.

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at the Bible in Cheapside, near Bread-street. 1692.

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M<sup>r</sup> SAMUEL LAWRENCE,

SIR,

**I**F I am more bold then welcome in the Liberty I take in directing these Lines to you, I am sorry, but must be content, and with Patience am resolv'd to bear the weight of your Censure; which I can more easily do, then think, that such a Man as you, should with such Fondness, upon no better Grounds, and in so unusual a Heat, express yourself so Unsuccessfully as neither to Convince your Adversaries, nor Please your Friends.

But knowing, with many others, that this comes not with a Surprise upon you, long since acquainting you with what is now brought to light, I shall not stand to make any Apology, nor for the Author, who never intended the Project of this Undertaking till now, being inform'd of his Death whose Pains I had desir'd, but by the Disposing-Hand of Providence in vain, and therefore have now adventur'd myself, believing thro' the Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, which is most seen in the Weakness of his Creatures, that necessary Supplies would be given to engage in a Cause that so nearly concerns his Honour and Interest in the World.

Had it not been undue Reflections from the Pulpit, invading the Right of my LORD, and impairing, as much as in you lay, the Credit of his Holy Ordinance, together with the Manners of some of your Friends, who being present when you preach'd that Sermon from the 1 Cor. 7. 14. and as Vessels fill'd with Wind, that must either vent or flie, not contented within their own Confines, but trespassing upon their Neighbours Borders to proclaim their own Folly, (I had almost said together with yours,) boldly affirming, That you

had assign'd Scripture enough for Infant-Baptism, these Lines had never taken Wing.

But the very act of Providence which brought your Sermon-Notes and Bible to my hand, was such as gives ground to conclude, that it was the Divine Pleasure, the Structure you had built upon so sandy a Bottom, should at once be cast into the Sea of Confusion. And to be silent, seeing his Right is under so manifest an Invasion, must bespeak us to be the most base of Vassals; for who is it that is bought with Monies of another, from amongst the Gally-Slaves, to enjoy Freedom, but will ever account himself oblig'd to maintain his Redeemer's Honour against all that shall offer to detract from, or lay a Blot upon it: How much less then shall the Redeemed of the Lord be still, who are under a greater Obligation by how much more great the Redemption-Price is, that was given? So that how ever Unfit in myself, yet from the Bond I am under, and the Nature of the present Exigence, (am forced) with *Cresus* his dumb Son to speak. ---- Yet from that Respect I have always born to you, and still do, I could sincerely wish you were not the Man I have to do with; but since it is so, I have acted with as much Candour as becomes me, the Nature of the Cause considered, having not rak'd in the Ashes of your Reflections, but wish they may lie and die, as they shall for me, unless new ones give life to the old; but hoping better things, and that you will not think the worse of your own because it brings Interest along with it, wishing you seriously to consider those Words of our Lord, Mat. 5. 19. *Whosoever therefore shall break one of the least of these commandments, and shall teach men so, shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven.* And together with Mat. 15. 8, 9. *In vain do they worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men.* So in love I commend you to God, and the Word of his Grace which is sufficient to instruct you in all things necessary to Salvation, thro' Christ, for whom I am all Mens, more especially yours,

S. A.



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TO THE  
READER.

*Friends and Brethren, more particularly you who were present at the SERMON preach'd from 1 Cor. 7. 14. by Mr. Lawrence at his Meeting-House in Namp-twich, Octob. 18. 1691; for whose sakes, next to the Glory of GOD, and our LORD JESUS CHRIST, I have wrote these Lines as an Answer to his Seven Arguments, whereby he would prove, That the Infants of Professing Christians ought to be Baptized.*

BRETHREN,

**I** *Have reason to believe, that you are in good earnest for Salvation, and to secure your precious and immortal Souls from Loss and Ruine, knowing that they once lost shall be no more capable of Repair. Matth. 16. 26. and that its not the whole World, though it could be given by one damned Soul to procure a Change of State; Wherefore, as a learned Man saith, As the Worth and Loss of Heaven can neither be imagin'd or valued, so the dreadful and perpetual Pains of Hell can neither be measur'd nor declar'd. To obtain the one, and escape the other (sure then) should be the principal Design and Business of every one of us in this Life.*

*The thing is possible, and true Happiness next to GOD's Pardoning Grace in CHRIST JESUS, consists in our Knowledge and Practice; not that Knowledge will profit  
other*

## To the READER.

other ways then as it is accompanied with Practice : Therefore says *CHRIST*, If ye know these things, happy are ye if ye do them, *Joh. 13. 17.* Neither will Practice avail, but as it is Conformity to that perfect Law and Rule which He hath given us, by which whosoever orders his Conversation aright, shall see the Salvation of *GOD*, *Psal. 50. 23.*

So useful is Holy Scripture which *GOD* hath given us as his Standard to measure all things that relate either to Matters of Judgment or Practice by, that without them we are wholly in the Dark, as to the Nature of all Positive and Instituted Worship; as Solomon would have been when he was to build the *LORD* a House, had he not received a Pattern for his Direction in doing all things that appertained thereto : Now as all things was to be done according to the Pattern given of old in the House of *GOD*, so nothing ought to be done now in the House or Worship of *GOD*, but what he hath assigned by Pattern and Direction in his Word : Wherefore saith he, To the law and to the testimonies ; if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them, *Isai. 8. 20.* To do more then he hath required, or to do one thing that is not required for another that is, will be found in a Day of Tryal, equally Abominable with a not doing his Requirements at all. It's certain all Persons and Things shall be pronounced good or bad, as they have or have not agreed with this perfect Law of *GOD*'s Word ; all Decrees of Councils, all Doctrines of Men, all Controversies in Religion, must be brought to the Test, and abide the Award and Determination thereof. Now that I may not detain you here, let me humbly and earnestly beg three things of you :

(1.) That you will pass Judgment upon what is commended to your view in the Arguments for, with the Answer and Arguments against Infant-Baptism, according as they bear proper-

## To the READER.

*proportion to GOD's Sacred Word, and not as they accord with far-fetcht Consequences and doubtful Conclusions, which at best (in Matters of Worship) can prove but one uncertain Medium and forged Warrant, which through the unwearied Industry of some skilful Artificers is made fatal to many, even such who do either affect Art above Truth, or such who have not skill to discern, and so become no less deceived then certain Country Peasants in some* \* Epistle to Jerusalem. *former Troubles in France, of whose Folly \* one* tell us, They attempting and entring into a City not far from them, and lighting into an Apothecary's Shop, furnished with all kind of Drugs and Dainties, and being allured by the pleasant Odours, and delight of the Confections, they tasted, and supposing all to be of the same kind, took and swallow'd down every thing; whereupon some fell sick of Feavers, some grew Frenzy, and many lost their Lives to please their Appetites, at least he that escap'd best gave occasion of Laughter to the Lookers on.----- What use I shall make of this shall be only to put you in mind, that it is recorded for the eternal Commendation of the noble Bereans, That they would not receive any thing, though offered by a Paul, until by searching the Scriptures they had found whether those things he taught were so or no.

(2.) *In reading of these Lines, that you would lay aside all Prejudice that may possess your Minds either against the Person or Subject, else the Mind by it will be rendred utterly incapable of making right Judgment, or receiving Truth though it presents itself with never so much Plainness and Evidence. Prejudice was one, if not the principal Cause why the Jews rejected CHRIST.*

(3.) *Having thus discharg'd your Minds of what may hinder your Profit, be earnest with GOD in Prayer to help you rightly*

## TO the READER.

*rightly to discern between the Mystery of Godlineſs, the Iniquity that is contain'd and detected in the Scriptures; and then I truſt the Plainneſs of Dreſs, in which theſe Lines appear, will not be of conſiderable Diſadvantages to the Truths contain'd therein, for the more falſe any thing is, the more artificially it had need to be ſet off and adorned: A blear'd Eye loves not to look on the Sun. Art and Humane Eloquence may tickle the Ear, and well-poliſh'd Diſcourſes may affect the Fancy, and yet prove but a mear Sound of Words and empty Huſks; remembering it's ſaid of Lacon, Hearing a Nightingale ſing, by the briskneſs of its Warbling, and delicate Notes, and the clearneſs and quavering Cadency of its Voyce, judg'd it a good Prey; but when he found and ſaw it to be of ſo ſmall a Size, he diſdainfully left it, and ſaid, Thou art a Voyce and nothing elle.*

*Therefore where the Evidence of Truth appears, reſuſe it not becauſe offer'd in, and preſented under the Diſadvantage of an unpoliſh'd Style, but let the Reaſon of what is ſaid be conſidered. And that the LORD may give you Underſtanding, ſhall be the Prayer of him that wiſheth you preſent and eternal Peace from GOD the Father, through our LORD JESUS CHRIST, in whom, though the Unworthieſt of his Servants, I am yours,*

S. A.

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**Modest Reply,**  
 T O  
 M<sup>r</sup> S A M U E L L A W R E N C E  
 H I S  
**Seven Arguments,**

F O R

Admitting the Infants of Professing Christians  
 into the CHURCH of CHRIST by Baptism, deli-  
 ver'd in a SERMON by him preach'd in *Namptwich*,  
*Octob. 18th, 1691.*

**A**S it may be safely concluded, that the great Interest  
 of Man's present Peace, and eternal Felicity, is emi-  
 nently concern'd in Religion and Godliness, even  
 so all true Religion is taught, and takes its Being  
 only from Divine Revelation, which God in for-  
 mer Ages, and divers manners gave out, until the Knowledge of  
 his Will was most perfectly reveal'd in and by his Son, and our  
 Saviour, *Heb. 1. 1, 2* who in Faithfulness to his Church discharg-  
 ed the Trust committed to him, ceasing not to make known to  
 the least Jot and Tittle every thing which he receiv'd or heard of  
 the Father, *Joh. 15. 15*. He alone being found worthy to set up a

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Standard,

Standard, and to become a Law-giver and Statute-maker unto all Generations, in things pertaining to the Worship of God; who no sooner had transmitted the Mind of Heaven to the Children of Men, by a sure and perfect Law, but it passes the Royal Assent, he fixes the Seal of his own most precious Blood unto it for its Confirmation, and then by the Father is advanced to the highest Dignity and Glory, as a convincing Evidence not only of his Son's Faithfulness, but the Purity and Perfection of that Law which he hath enacted as the only Mediator, to the end Man should be perfect in the whole Will of God.

And in further Testimony thereof, how great hath Heaven's care been throughout all Ages, in preserving the Scriptures clean from those Corruptions and Errours which the Heart of Man (tho' learn'd, if un sanctified) is too apt to dote on, and cleave unto; it is no less then wonderful to consider in whose hands the Sacred Scriptures in past Ages have been lodged, and by whom they have been handed down to us, that they have yet strength so loudly to bear Witness against Errours entertained with such Fondness, and maintain'd with such Heat as of late hath appeared, particularly in the Defence of that Unscriptural Practice of Infant Baptism; and that there is not yet so much as one Word to be produced as their Warrant in doing (what) they have so earnestly contended for, strongly argue, that God hath marvelously over-ruled the Heart and Hands of all heretofore concern'd in that blessed Work of Translating the Scriptures into a Language known and understood by every one of us.

And as to the Sufficiency of Scripture, as it contains all things necessary to be believed, known, or done either for Salvation, or Church Communion: I know not, that what is said in the sixth Article of the Church of *England*, is forreign to the Judgment of any Professing Christian, saving those of the Papal Communion, and some few of late sprung up, who through Temptation and the Delusion of their own Hearts, have rejected the Word as it is contain'd in the Scriptures of Truth as Useless; the one accounts it insufficient to direct us in all things necessary, and therefore to the Word they joyn their own Traditions for the rendring it a more compleat and perfect Rule; the other accounts it Useless, and therefore directs all for Instruction to the Dictates of the Light within: Of both these I have only to say, (Lord) deliver my Soul from coming into their Secrets.

But



But you and we being agreed in all things touching the Authority and Sufficiency of the Scriptures, I presume from thence an equal Freedom in us, to refer the Tryal of the things wherein we differ, to the Determination of Holy Writ, being firmly resolv'd for myself to abide by its Award, sincerely desiring that nothing may pass for Truth but upon their Testimony.

Now I shall not take notice of any thing you offer in your Sermon preach'd from 1 Cor. 7. 14. *Elſt were your children unclean; but now are they holy*; before you come to ſtate the Queſtion, (1.) Becauſe I would not have this Paper to ſwell into too great a Bulk. (2.) Becauſe there is not any thing material but what I ſhall meet with under one or other of your Arguments, ſhall therefore recite your Doctrines, which was this:

*Doctrines, That the Seed of Profeſſing Chriſtians have a Right to Baptiſm, and ought thereby to be admitted into the Church or Body of Chriſt.*

Whether your Text doth preach the ſame Doctrine you do from it, I queſtion, and conclude, that there is no more a-kin between your Queſtion ſtated, and your Words rightly conſider'd in their proper place, then there would have been, had you drawn the ſame Conclusion from the firſt words in *Genefis*, which tells us, *That in the beginning God made the heaven and the earth*; as I truſt hereafter will be made evident to every judicious and unprejudiced Reader.

You proceed and ſay, *Here I ſhall not undertake to produce all the Proof that is for it, nor answer every Quibble that is brought againſt it; but lay that Foundation which if of God ſtandeth ſure, and if it ſtands, the contrary muſt needs fall.*

*Anſ.* That you have produced more Proof then the Scripture affords you for your Practice, is plain; and Scripture-Arguments that ſtrongly make head againſt your Practice, be by you accounted Quibbles, is not ſtrange, but very ſtrange it is that you ſee cauſe to query, whether your Foundation be of God, and yet dare lend a hand to ſupport a ſinking and falling *Dagon*; The Idol could not ſtand before the Arr, (even ſo Lord) in this our day, let Errour fall before thy Truth; and help you ſo to diſcern the Sandineſs of that Foundation upon which all Errour, with that of Infant-Baptiſm is built, as that you may better improve the Certainty of its Ruine then thoſe biggotted Prieſts and blind *Philiſtines*

did the Fall and Ruine of their adored *Dagon*, 1 Sam. 5. 3, 4.

I now come to your seven Arguments you offer as Proof and Evidence, though reasonably we might have expected for Proof and Confirmation of a Doctrine of so great moment, two or three Witnesses from Holy Scripture; but knowing that no such Evidence is to be found there, we shall (weigh) and allow of your Authority, provided your Arguments are strongly concluded in, and truly deduced from the Scriptures; and because I would not in the least be thought to injure you in my Reply, I shall at large recite your several Arguments, and so well as I can, with the help of some Collections, endeavour the Confutation of them. And you say in your

### FIRST ARGUMENT,

(1.) *I argue from the Command of Christ, Matth. 28. 19. 20. For (1.) the Command is so general as to include not exclude Infants, surely they will be allowed to be a considerable Part of the Nations. (2.) Christ doth here prescribe the way of gathering his Church, and preserving it to the end of the World: now his Church consists of Infants as well as grown Persons; and both are to be dealt with according to that State: As to grown Persons, First teach them and baptize them, as to Infants, sending them Disciples baptize them in order to their being taught when capable of it. (3.) All Nations is set in Opposition to the Jewish Nation; therefore, as the Disciples would have understood what and whom Christ meant, if he had said, Go circumcise all Nations, &c. So, and its observable that Baptism was of use amongst them, though not a Sacrament before, as Maimonides speaks, That they baptized the Infant or little Stranger upon the knowledge of the House of Judgment, i. e. on their desire in behalf of their Children. (4.) The Practice of the Apostles in Baptizing whole Households, is a plain Comment on the Text, and shews how they understood it. Acts 16. 15. 33. 1 Cor. 1. 16. (5.) Infants are Disciples, Acts 15. 10. together with their Parents, therefore may be baptized, if not Disciples of Man's making; so neither was Paul yet, of God's making who graciously accepts them, and takes them into his Covenant. If any (object), That such Disciples are meant as are capable of observing Christ's Command. Ans. It's true, as to grown Persons with whom the Apostles had most to do, in gathering a Church out of the World to Christ, but as the Proselytes were first taught and then circumcised, but these Children*

were

were first circumcised before they were taught, so it may and ought to be here nothing in Christ's Commission gainsaying it.

### FIRST ANSWER.

Whether all that you have said here doth not directly tend to darken Knowledge, I refer to your own Conscience, and shall leave all wise men to judge when the Text is read, and the order of it laid down.

Our Lord Jesus Christ, after he had declared himself invested with absolute Power given him of the Father, to be Sovereign Lord, and supreme Law-giver to the whole World through all Generations: He saith, as *Mat. 28. 19, 20. Go ye therefore, and teach all Nations, baptizing them in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: And lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the World.*

This Command is so extensive as authorizes the Apostles of our Lord to take in by Baptism all Nations Discipled, or so many of all Nations as should be made Disciples; but how it includes one Infant, that neither is made, nor is capable (as such) of being made a Disciple. I see not (otherways) than as Infants are a considerable part of all Nations, and if therefore to be baptized, then are all Nations to be baptized by the lump, (even) Infidels, Idolaters, prophane and abominable persons, as they are a part, yea, the greatest part of all Nations: And this will as truly follow as the other, if this Command may be understood without restriction, but if not, then the limitation must needs lye in the Word, which says, Teach or (Disciple); then neither the Infant nor prophane person can be admitted by this Text, if the Order in which it is laid down be duly considered, which is thus:

- (1.) Our Lord Jesus commands them to (go) to all Nations.
- (2.) To teach all Nations, or Disciple them.
- (3.) That they baptize such so taught or Discipled.
- (4.) That they shall further Teach and Instruct such baptized Disciples to observe all other things that *Christ hath commanded.*

Now, that this, and no less than this, is intended here, will appear with great Evidence from the Consent of such as dissent from

us: And therefore Mr. Baxter speaking of this Text, shews the several Work and Duty of the Apostles, in their several Places and Orders, who tells us in his second Disputation of Right to Sacraments, *Pag.* 149. 150: ' Their (1.) Task is to make Disciples, which Mark calls *Believers*. (2.) Their work is to baptize them, whereunto is annexed the Promise of Salvation. (3.) Their work is to teach them all other things which are after to be learned in the School of Christ. Further saith he, To condemn this Order, is to condemn all Rules of Order; for where can we expect to find it, if not here? I profess my Conscience is fully satisfied from this Text, that it is one sort of Faith, even Saving Faith, that must go before Baptism, the profession whereof the Minister must expect. And in his *Poor Man's Family-Book*, *pag.* 168. saith, ' The Church never knew any Baptism, but such as was joyned with a present profession of present Faith, Repentance, and Renunciation of the Devil, the World, and the Flesh, and a total devotedness to God and Christ, with more to this purpose.

And the Author of the Annotations began by Mr. Poole, upon this Text, expressly saith, ' I cannot be of their mind, who think persons may be baptized before they be taught, we want Presidents of any such Baptisms in the Scripture, tho' indeed we find Presidents of persons baptized, who had but a small degree of knowledge of the Gospel, but it should seem, that they were all taught, and then baptized. Now what this Author saith farther with reference to Infant-Baptism, because they are a part of all Nations, I leave, as that which may justly evidence him guilty of Self-Contradiction and Inconsistence.

You add further, That *Christ is here prescribing a way to gather his Church, and of preserving it to the Worlds end; and That the Church consists of Infants, as well as grown persons.*

*Answer.* As to the first, we grant, that Christ here is prescribing a way of gathering his Church, but that his Church was made up of Infants as well as grown persons, (professing Believers) is a bold Assertion, and a meer Imposition upon your Auditory, having not the least Light or Evidence, nor being able to give so much as one Instance of any one Infant that was ever admitted, by any of the Apostles, a Member of any Church by Baptism in their days: Could you do this, you would do something to purpose; but to undertake this Task would be to labour under

under an utter Impossibility, knowing the old Maxim, that says, *That which appears not, is not.*

You further say, *Had Christ said, Go circumcise all Nations, the Disciples would have understood what and whom he meant.*

*Ans.* It seems then, in your Apprehension, the Apostles were ignorant of what Christ meant, and what they did in pursuance to his Command they did at a venture. Is not this peevish Reasoning, and a manifest impeaching Christ and his Disciples? Was Christ so dark and unintelligible in what he commanded them, that they could not apprehend him? Is not *Go teach and baptize all Nations* as easie to be understood, as *Go circumcise every Male at eight days old*? Surely they did understand Christ, and you may, if you will not put out your own Eyes, which I entreat you to have a care of, lest continuing to preach up, and practise things contrary too, or at least not agreeable with the Doctrine of Christ and his Apostles, you become culpable, and so liable to that Anathema pronounc'd against all, tho' an Angel from Heaven that shall preach another Gospel, *Gal. 1. 8.* And *Maimonides* tells you no more than what we allow you, That the Jews of old did baptize the Profelyte and little Stranger, but in that they did not use Baptism as a Sacrament, as you your self acknowledge, is a Tradition of the superstitious Jews, an Authority sufficient to warrant you in your sprinkling Infants as a Gospel Ordinance. Sure, Sir, this your Practice, as well as some of their Traditions, bespeaks Christ's Command to be void, and of none effect, and in plain terms gives the Lye to Mr. Baxter, and more, in their Comments upon the *Commission of Christ*: For Mr. G. Lawson, in his *Magna Charta* dedicated to Hen. B. of London, pag. 27, 28. tells us, That the word *Teach* before baptizing imports a teaching with success, so as to cause the persons taught to learn, i. e. to receive their Doctrine, understand it, approve it, be convinc'd of the Truth of it, and be converted by it, so far as to be made Christians. And so the Apostles understood Christ, as is evident by their whole practise; and if you dare not say, that they were mistaken in the mind of Christ, I am sorry you give me occasion to tell you, that you are; and as a Friend, I advise you to correct the mistake you are under, and act for time to come more conformably to Christ's Doctrine and his Apostles Practice.



But you further urge, *The practice of the Apostles in baptizing whole Households, for your practice in baptizing Infants.*

*Answer.* That Households was baptized we grant, but that Infants was in those Houses is more than you can prove, and the best ground you have for your Practice here, is Probability; there *may be* and *may not be*, is too slight a Ground to build so great an Ordinance upon as Baptism: We could give you an account of as many Households in this County, if not in this Town, that are baptized, and that have no Children in them, as you read of in the Gospel; but admit there were Children, which remains for you to prove, yet it follows not that they were baptized, it being usual in Scripture to take a part for the whole; as 1 Sam. 1. 21. saith, *All the House went up to offer the yearly Sacrifice*; yea, the 22, 23. Verses say expressly, That *Hannah* and her Child *Samuel* went not up, (yet *all the House.*) So Luke 2. 1. *In those days went out a decree from Caesar Augustus, that all the world should be taxed*; yet who will understand any other part of the World than that within his own Dominions, and within the bounds of his own Territories (yet *all the world.*) And so in many other places. But to speak of these Households in particular, will, if I mistake not, turn your own Artillery against you, which we shall do in a few words; and,

(1.) To the Household of *Lydia*. 'Tis said she and her Household was baptized, Acts 16. 15. but no ground to conclude that there were any Infants there, but a fair ground to suspect the contrary; and that she might be a Maid or a Widow, there being no mention made of her Husband, and she reckon'd the Head of the Family, which is not proper where there is a Husband; besides, she was a Trader, and at this time many miles from home being now at *Philippi*, but was of the City of *Thialira*, as ver. 12<sup>o</sup> compared with the 14. so that if she had any Children, it is probable she should carry them about with her from place to place, whither she went to trade and merchandize; most likely she should leave them at her abode in *Thialira*, and not that she would be cumbered with the trouble and care of her Infants in her Travels to traffick: But that this may issue with Evidence against you, the Apostles, in the last Verse in this Chapter, they went into the House of *Lydia*, and when they had comforted the Brethren, they departed: So that it's plain those of *Lydia's* Household were Brethren, and the Brethren were capable of being comforted, which Infants are not in the sense of that Text.



A second Household is that of the Jaylor, in the 33d Verse of the same Chapter, *the Jaylor and all his were baptized straightway*; (all his) that is, as one observes, his Wife, his Servants and Relations, for to them it may more properly refer than to his Children, who whether he had any is uncertain, but whether he had or not, it's not material in this Case; for in v. 32. 'tis said expressly, *And they (i.e. Paul and Silas) spake unto him the word of the Lord, and to all that were in his House*; which cannot be imagined they should do unto Infants: And v. 34. saith, *He rejoiced believing in God with all his House*: So then all that were baptized in his House, were such as heard the Word of the Lord, and rejoiced believing in God, which Infants are not capable to do. But

A Third Household is that of *Crispus, Acts 18. 8. And Crispus the chief ruler of the Synagogue believed on the Lord with all his house, and many of the Corinthians hearing, believed, and were baptized*. Though it be certain, that he, with all his House, was baptized, from 1 Cor. i. 14. yet from this Text it is not so plain, that he, with all his House, was baptized, as that he, with all his House, believed on the Lord. And that such as believe were fit Subjects of Baptism, who denies? But,

A Fourth Household is that of *Stephanas, 1 Cor. i. 16. says Paul, And I baptized also the house of Stephanas*. Now, if any enquire what is said of this Household, to hinder but that Infants might be there and consequently baptized? why enough, and that which may satisfy all men, that there were no Infants here; for the Apostle saith in the 16th Chapter of this Epistle, and 15th verse, *Ye know that the house of Stephanas were the first-fruits of Achaia, and that they addicted themselves to the ministry of the Saints*. Which Infants, as such, will never be capable of doing, but are to be ministered unto: Therefore how great an Uncertainty do the Patrons and Defenders of Infant-Baptism labour under! Hence it was that the worthy Dr. Hammond grants, that no concluding Argument can be deduced from the baptizing whole Households, for baptizing Infants; and certainly the Doctor concludes but rationally herein, knowing that a clear word of Command is necessary to constitute a Gospel Ordinance; as you your self have fully acknowledged in time past.

I now pass to the last Branch of your Argument, wherein you say the Infants of Professing Christians ought to be baptized, because they are Disciples, which you would intimate from *Acts 15. 10.*

which I find thus worded : *Now therefore why tempt ye God to put a yoke upon the neck of the Disciples, which neither our Fathers nor we were able to bear.*

What is here in all this Text to prove Infants Disciples ? Not one tittle ; the Disciples here spoken of are those Gentiles that were converted to the Faith at *Antioch*, who met with some disturbance, occasion'd by some that came down from *Judea*, urging the necessity of Circumcision, saying as *Vers. 1.* That *unless ye be circumcised ye cannot be saved* : Hereupon *Paul* and *Barnabas* contends with them, and says, *Why tempt ye God to put a yoke upon the neck of the Disciples*, in imposing the observance of Circumcision, with the other Ceremonies of the Law upon the Gentile Church ? For the Yoke spoken of by the Apostle lay not strictly in Circumcision, but in keeping of the whole Law, whereunto they were firmly bound and obliged by Circumcision, *Gal. 5. 3.* which Infants were never capable of doing, neither in the least are here intended ; for though this Church at *Antioch* is made up of Disciples, we believe ; but that one Infant is here included we deny : For when the Dissention grew hot between *Paul* and *Barnabas*, and the men that came down from *Judea*, the Disciples determined to send *Paul* and *Barnabas* up to the Council at *Jersalem*, to enquire as to that matter, *ver. 2.* and in the Third Verse you read, That the Church or Disciples spoke of in the Second Verse brought them on their way ; and when they returned with their Answer from the Council, you read in the *31. ver.* that *they rejoiced for the consolation* ; and in the *32. ver.* that *Judas* and *Silas* exhorted the Brethren, and with many words confirmed them ; all which Offices performed, and Comfort received, Infants can no way be capable of, neither can be intended in this place by the Disciples.

Besides, to say Infants, as such are Disciples, is insipid, and contrary to the true import of the word, being render'd by all Lexicons and Dictionaries that ever I saw, which tell us, that a Disciple is a Scholar or Learner. \* *Austin* saith, That those who go about to make Infants Disciples, do not only lose their pains, but expose themselves to laughter : And though it be true, that all Disciples are of God's making, and not Man's, as you say Infants are, and *Paul* was, yet we tell you, that Infants neither are nor can be made Disciples without a Miracle, according to the sense and signification of the word ; neither are any made so, as to be fit Subjects of Baptism,

till

\* 66 *Epiſt.*  
to *Dard.*

till they have been instructed by Man what to do; as appears from the Commission and *Paul's* own Case; for, upon his enquiring what the Lord would have him to do, you read, the Lord sends him to *Damascus*, and there, saith he, *it shall be told thee what thou must do, Acts 9. 6.* And accordingly the Lord sends *Ananias* to meet and instruct *Paul*, as *ver. 10, 11.* I come to your

## Second A R G U M E N T.

I argue from the nature of the Covenant and Baptism, as its Seal; the Covenant belongs to them, therefore its Seal, *Gen. 17. 7.* *Acts 2. 39.* The Promise is to you and your Children, &c. Its true primarily, and principally it belongs to the Parents, who can come in and agree to it, and seal, but so as to include their Seed: If you have a Lease in which your Childrens Lives are put together with your own, will any say the Childrens are not in, because the Parents have been the principal Actors? (1) So that this is nothing but what is common amongst Men. (2) G O D hath dealt thus with Man all along in the Covenant of Works with Adam, in the Old Testament with the Patriarchs or Fathers, and can we think He hath altered his Methods? What Evidence can be brought of that? (3) It is but reason it should be so, for Children are a part of their Parents till they come to stand on their own Legs, and act for themselves. (4) The thing signified doth belong to Infants, as the pardon of Sin, Regeneration, and the Kingdom of Heaven, &c. therefore the Sign if the greater, then the less. If any object, That for the same reason they may come to the Lord's Table, because they have the thing signified; Ans. Weakly argued, because that though the thing signified is the same, yet the sign is different, and they may be capable of the one, that are not of the other: Because they receive Milk, are they therefore fit for strong Meat? (2) may they not be taken in at the Door, and washed by Baptism, because unfit, by reason of their Age, to come to the Lord's Supper.

## Second A N S W E R.

If you would carefully examine and look into the nature of this Covenant mention'd *Gen. 17.* you will find it such as yields not your Infant-Seed the least Right to Gospel Ordinances, it being a Covenant peculiar to *Abraham*, which God made with him for

his natural Seed, his Children according to the Flesh, wherein we have God promising unto him a very numerous and honourable Issue, *v. 5, 6.* (2) That as God hath graciously condescended to become a God in Covenant to *Abraham*, even so He will continue to be the God of his Seed after him, *ver. 7.* from whence it's evident, that God hath chosen the whole Off-spring of *Abraham*, in a peculiar manner, to be his Covenant-People, by vertue of that Covenant that He made with him for himself and his Seed; and therefore (3) God on his part promiseth to plant and settle the Seed and Posterity of *Abraham* in the promised *Canaan*, which was a Blessing peculiar to that People, made sure to them by a Covenant-promise on God's part, *ver. 8.* as a Token whereof, he gives them Circumcision to be kept and observed by them, through their Generations, as *ver. 9, 10.* And this we judge easie to make evident, were that our Business, though there be something of the Covenant of Grace intermixt with it.

But if by *Covenant*, *Gen. 17. 7.* you mean the Covenant of Grace made in Christ, the alone Mediator unto Eternal Salvation, why then we cheerfully assent, that the Children of all professing Christians are included, and heartily believe that the Infants of others are not excluded, this Covenant with *Abraham* being but a recital of that which God made with lapsed *Adam*, which was the Covenant of Grace in the first Edition of it, *Gen. 3. 15.*

And Mr. *Baxter* is so far from thinking that any are excluded the Grace of this Covenant, that he affirms, The Law of Grace was as truly made with all men in *Adam*, as the Law of Innocency was; and that all were really alike in *Adam*; and that *Cain* was not the Serpents Seed meerly for original Sin, and as born of *Adam*, as *Abel* was; nor did God make him the Serpents Seed by Reprobation, but that he made himself so by superadded Sins against the Redeemer and Law of Grace.

So that if a being in the Covenant of Grace be a sufficient ground to baptize any, why then it is confess, that all Infants have equally a Right to Baptism.

But it is humbly offer'd, That neither Baptism now, nor Circumcision in its place, was given as a Sign and Seal to the Covenant of Grace; for though the efficacy of its Grace did reach innocents and Believers in all Ages, yet what Ordinance was ever annexed to it as its Seal through the several Ages from *Adam* to *Noah*, in which Ages lived *Abel*, *Seth*, *Enoch*, who by Faith walked with God, and *Noah*, with whom this Covenant was renewed

newed, *Gen. 6. 18.* and from *Noah to Abraham*, and from the time that *Abraham* had this Covenant ratified by a sure Promise of a faithful Seed, before the Covenant of Circumcision was given out, which was about 25 years.

A Seal it was to *Abraham* of the Righteousness of his Faith wherewith he believed whilst uncircumcised; so the Holy Ghost applies it, *Rom. 4. 9, 10, 11.* Verses, but to no other Person as a Seal as I know of. Nay, to imagine that Circumcision was a Seal proper and peculiar to the Covenant of Grace, must needs be a Mistake, else the Patriarchs of old, *Melchisedeck* King of *Salem*, and Priest of the Most High God, an eminent Type of Christ, just *Lot*, and *Job* God's righteous Servant, of whom it's said *there is none like him in all the Earth*, could have laid as good a claim thereunto as any besides; but Circumcision never received its Being as a Seal annexed to the Covenant of Grace, for had it been given as a Token peculiar thereto, it would have remain'd (I presume) as unchangeable as the Covenant itself, and would not have vanish'd away with the other shadows of the *Mosaic* Dispensation. So that though we grant your Infant-Seed to be in the Covenant of Grace, yet because of their Interest therein, it follows not that they have a Right to Baptism, that being now no more a Sign peculiar to the Covenant, than Circumcision was, that is now abolish'd; for were it a Sign, then the Covenant once had two Signs annexed to it, as proper and peculiar, even from the time of the institution of Baptism to Christ's Death; till then Circumcision was in force, and how absurd is this to imagine? Neither is Baptism any more a Sign which you grant Children than the Lord's Supper, of which you most uncharitably deprive them, for they who in a Gospel sense have a Right to the one, have no less Right to the other.

Besides, the Seed promised to *Abraham*, in the Covenant of Grace made or renewed with him, is a spiritual and believing Seed; and so the Holy Ghost expressly tells you, if you dare depend upon his Testimony, *Gal. 3. 6, 7, 8, 9.* of whom *Isaac* was the Type, not a carnal and fleshly Seed, figured by *Ishmael*, as is obvious in the Allegory explain'd by the Apostle *Gal. 4.* from 22, to 29. And as it is Faith only which denominates a person to be the Child of *Abraham*, *Gal. 3. 7, 9.* so it is Faith only that bespeaks a Person to be a fit subject for Baptism, as *Act. 8. 37, 38.* Could any person shew where the Holy Ghost calls Baptism a Seal, 'twould be of some service to your Cause, but as



that cannot be assigned, so Baptism cannot be any more than Circumcision was, a Seal; for the proper use of a Seal is to confirm, ratifie, and make sure Bonds and Contracts, &c. But, I pray, what is it that Baptism confirms, ratifies, and makes sure unto Children, more than what is through Grace made sure to them, to wit, Eternal Life by Jesus Christ without Baptism? 'Tis true, by Faith in Baptism we put to our Seal, but there is something else which God annexeth as his Seal, whereby he scaleth up Believers, the alone Children of *Abraham*, and confirms them in the sure hope and expectation of Eternal Life, viz. the *Holy Spirit*, *Ephes. 1. 13. and Chap. 4. 30. Grieve not the Holy Spirit of God, whereby you are sealed to the day of Redemption.* Many may be baptized, that are not of the Seed promised to *Abraham*, as many such heretofore have been to instance only in *Judas, Simon Magus* and the foolish Virgins, but the Holy Spirit is given to none as a Seal, but such who by believing are not Bastards, but the true Sons of *Abraham*.

Furthermore, if you consider the nature and scope of the Covenant made with *Abraham*, it must needs make void your manner of arguing, because it's said to *Abraham* and his Seed, *Therefore say you to us and our seed.* But now consider, are each of you by this Covenant made the Father of a blessed Seed, as *Abraham* was the Father of the Faithful? Or can you claim the Promise for your selves and your Seed, according to the Tenure of *Abraham's* Covenant, and as he might (*know*) but we must rest in a relation to him, as Children, and so receive his Blessings, i. e. the Blessings promised to him for his Seed, and that by means of our own Faith, and for our selves alone? Believers, because they are *Abraham's* Seed, are blessed with faithful *Abraham*, *Gal. 3. 9. And if we are Christ's, then are we Abraham's seed and heirs according to promise, ver. 29.* So much to the Covenant and its Seal.

You add, *The Promise is to you and your Children Acts 2. 39.*

Ans. If by Promise you mean the Remission of Sin, and the Gifts of the Holy Ghost, spoken of in *v. 38.* we are of your mind, That they belong to every penitent and believing Jew: Even so to every penitent and believing Gentile, the Wall of Partition being now taken down, is this Grace extended, as is plain In the close of the Verse, *Even to as many, (i. e. Jews or Gentiles) as the Lord our God shall call.* But doth it follow hence, that any person ought to be baptized before Repentance, whereas it is our being



being renewed by Repentance and Faith in our Lord Jesus Christ, that evidenceth our Right to the Grace promised, and Baptism is prescribed to be performed as a Duty by such, for the obtaining the Grace promised? But if you say it doth follow, I demand why *John* did treat any of the natural Offspring of *Abraham* so roughly as he seems to do, calling them a *Brood of Vipers*, and as such, rejected them, requiring them to bring forth *Fruits meet for Repentance*, *Mat. 3. 7, 8, 9.* And doth not *Acts 2. 38.* as plainly say, *Repent and be baptized?* Is not therefore to baptize any without the least shew of Repentance in the Subject, to invert the Order of the Holy Ghost, it being certain, that you and your Children, in the 39th Verse, is not so properly you and your Infant, as you and your Posterity? I wish it were not to be said of you in this case as *Stephen* speaks of some Jews in another, *Ye stiff-necked and uncircumcised in heart and ears, ye do always resist the Holy Ghost; as your Fathers did, so do ye, Acts 7. 51.*

You proceed, telling us, *That God dealt thus with Man in all Ages, in the Covenant of Works with Adam, in the Old Testament with the Patriarchs or Fathers, and can we think He 'hath altered his Methods? What Evidence of that?*

*Ans.* That the Transactions of God with his People and their Seed in all Ages, hath been in a Covenant-way, and will be so to the end of the World, and that our Seed is interested in the Grace of the same Covenant that *Adam* and the Fathers were in all Generations; God hath not altered his methods at all, with respect to the Covenant he hath made, which is unalterable and everlasting as *David* saith, *2 Sam. 23. 5.* As you had an Interest in the Covenant of Grace, so have your Infant-seed, but should they live to forfeit their Interest in that Grace by actual Transgression, as you and I have done, may not God direct to the use of such *Mediums* as Faith, Repentance, and Obedience are, for the Sinner's Recovery, and give out such *Laws and Ordinances* as is consistent with his own Grace and Wisdom, upon his dissolving of one Church Frame, and erecting another, without the Sinner's controul?

You say, *Children are a part of their Parents, and of the same Condition with them, &c.*

*Ans.* If this pass for right Reason with you, it will not so with me, neither will it at another turn pass for good sense with you. We grant, that Children are of the same nature (humane) with

with their Parents, Bone of their Bone, and Flesh of their Flesh, but not alwaies of the same State with their Parents. What think you? Was *Cain* of the same Condition with *Adam*, *Ishmael* with *Abraham*, *Esau* with *Isaac*, *Absalom* with *David*, *Manasseh* and *Amon* with *Hezekiah*, or good *Hezekiah* with wicked *Ahaz*, or good *Josiah* with his wicked Father *Amon*, or those Children of *Israel* who enter'd and possessed the promised *Canaan* with their wicked Father, whose Carcasses for their Sin fell in the Wilderness. How directly opposite is this your beloved Notion to that Rule of perfect Righteousness and Equity, which God hath laid down in that 18th of *Ezekiel*, wherein he attesteth, that *all Souls are his*, as *v. 4.* and that *the soul of the Son shall not dye for the sin of the Father*; intimating, that the Father by becoming a wicked Apostate and abominable Idolater, may change his own State, and forfeit his own Interest in the Covenant, but thereby shall not weaken his Childs Interest in the Covenant; which abideth firm unto Eternal Life, notwithstanding any Sin in the Father; nothing can ruin that, but the Childs own Disobedience, as the whole Chapter sheweth.

Nay, if the good and happy estate of Infants depends so much upon the believing of mediate Parents, is not the Salvation of such Infants rather to be imputed to their Parents believing, than to Christ in dying? But this your way is not God's way, for God claims a Right to, and a Propriety in the Children of an Apostate *Israelite*, as well as the Children of his faithful Servants; which could not be, should the Covenant-Interest of Children be suspended upon the detection of their immediate Parents; but so it is, *Ezek 16. 20, 21.* *Moreover, thou hast taken thy sons and thy daughters, whom thou hast born unto me, and these hast thou sacrificed unto them, to be devoured: Is this of thy whoredoms a small matter, that thou hast slain my Children?*

You add, *That the thing signified belongs unto Children, to wit, Pardon, Regeneration, and the Kingdom of Heaven, if the greater, then the l<sup>st</sup>.*

*Ans.* That the Grace of Pardon belongs to Children we believe, flowing purely from the Grace of God in Christ to them, and not by vertue of any Act of Faith in their immediate Parents; That the Kingdom of Heaven also belongs to Children, we fully consent to with you; but that Regeneration doth belong to Children, or the Duties of it is any where required of them, I profess

my self a Stranger ; and that this may issue, I do sincerely promise, that when you can by good warrant prove it the Duty of Infants to be regenerated, and that such are regenerated, according to the true sense of that word, to be one with you in the baptizing of them.

As to the Objection formed in the close of your Argument, I judge it stands strong against you, till you have given us a more convincing Answer, than telling us it's weakly argued, amounts to, appealing to your own Conscience, whether Infants, with respect to Spirituals, are any more fit for Milk than strong Meat, whilst capable of neither ; and whether the Prerequisites necessary to Baptism be not superiour to the Capacity of Children, as those necessary to the Lord's Supper, whether an actual Dying to Sin can be any more the work of an Infant than Self-examination. I now come to your

### Third ARGUMENT.

*I argue from Circumcision ; Baptism comes in the room of Circumcision, Col. 2. 11, 12. they belong to the same Covenant, they have the same Nature, the same Ends and Uses ; there is no essential Difference, therefore there is the same reason why Children should be baptized now, as that they should be circumcised then ; and had it not been so, doubtless the believing Jews would have made a scruple of it, and debated with the Apostles about it, as they do of other matters, and that would have occasion'd a more full Decision of the Point ; but there was no occasion given them to raise Scruples, and therefore we bear nothing of it. [Objection.] But there is no Command. [Answ.] A general Command there is for the making it an Ordinance, a particular Command there did not need, as to the determining the proper Subjects of it, because it is what might easily be gathered from the foregoing practice of the Church : And that there is no particular Command, is an Argument to me, that though Christ changed the outward Signs, yet not the Subjects, for if it had been so, he would have told us. And that there is no little weight in these three Scripture-Arguments, and over, that which is equivalent to an express Command. -- I speak to wise men, judge ye what I say, 1 Cor. 10. 15.*

## Third ANSWER.

If Circumcision be the best Authority you have for Infant-Baptism, as I think it may be, or at least as good as any, in another Case, I should mightily pity you, to think how poor a Shift you make to prove a New-Testament-Ordinance by an Old-Testament-Writ, and an abolish'd Ceremony. Is not this as good Arguing ? The Lord's Supper comes in the room of the Passover; the Children eat of the Passover, why not of the Lord's Supper ? But that Baptism comes in the room of Circumcision is not in the least proved, nor can be from *Col. 2. 11, 12.* for there the Apostle is speaking of a Circumcision, then and to this day in force, to wit, the cutting of the fore-skin of the Heart, a putting off the Body of Sin, in token whereof the believing *Colossians* are said to be buried with Christ in Baptism.

Besides, that Baptism comes not in the room of Circumcision, is further evident, as they were both in force together, from the time of Baptism's Institution to the end of our Saviour's Life; whereas if Circumcision had been a Type of Baptism, the Shadow must have vanish'd when the Substance was come, but no man will say, that Circumcision was abolish'd, until Christ by Death nail'd it, with other Ordinances that was against us to his Cross.

You add, *They belong to the same Covenant.*

*Ans.* That they may appertain to the Covenant, as annexed thereto by positive Institution, we believe but as we told you before, neither of them as Signs and Tokens proper and peculiar to the Covenant of Grace, and therefore can belong only to them to whom they are assigned. —

You say, *They are of the same nature.*

*Ans.* Is not this to say the Ministration of Christ is as legal as the *Mosaical*, contrary to *Heb. 8. 6; 7.* and so on. If Flesh and Spirit, Legal and Evangelical, be one in Nature, then Baptism is the same with Circumcision.

You add further, *They have the same Ends and Uses.*

*Ans.* How that appears I know not : Was not this one end of Circumcision, to confirm unto *Abraham* and the Jews, in their successive Generations, that Christ the Promised Seed should come of the Line of *Abraham*, according to the Flesh; whereas Baptism hath no such End, therefore the Analogy betwixt them are not the

the same as you imagine: However from what you have said you conclude, there is the same Reason that Children should be baptized now as circumcised then, if you have the same warrant for the one as for the other: I confess, the Reason is the same, else not; for the tryal hereof, I will briefly enquire (1.) what it was that made Circumcision the Duty of Children; (2.) the Qualifications that gave Children a Right thereunto. But,

(1.) That which made Circumcision the Duty of Children, was not their Covenant-Interest, as we have before shewed. Had that, the Patriarchs, *Melchisedeck*, *Lot*, and *Job*, had had an undoubted Right thereto, and their Posterity, as they were of the same condition with them, as before you have argued; but it was the positive Command of God, given out to *Abraham* in *Gen. 17. 10.* Every Man-child amongst you, saith the Lord, shall be circumcised. Here Circumcision is introduced by Divine Institution and Appointment; and that you may assuredly know who are the Subjects hereof, the Lord plainly tells them, every male Child amongst them shall be circumcised, the time when is expressly set down, viz. at eight days old, *v. 12.* They were not to do it sooner, nor defer it longer. And as the Law is thus expresse for the Male Children, through their Generations, even so it is as positive for those born in their Houses, that are not of their Seed, and the Stranger that is bought with their Money, *v. 13.* and also for the Profelyte, *Exod. 12. 48, 49.* And to oblige all to the due observance of this Law, the Lord joyns a severe Threatning of disinheriting or cutting off every uncircumcised Male Child amongst them, (or rather every man amongst them that circumcised not his Males) else the Commination would turn its edge against the Child for the Parents Fault, knowing the Child could only be passive in the thing. Thus you see by what Authority Circumcision was practised.

(2.) The Qualification that gave Children a Right thereto, was not their Covenant-Interest, for then their Females had the same Right as their Males; besides, by vertue of the Institution, such were to receive Circumcision, as you will have much ado to believe were interested in the Covenant, to instance only in *Ismael* and *Esau*; and the words of the Apostle, that saith, *All are not Israel that are of Israel.*

*Abraham's* whole Male natural Seed must needs be circumcised; yet who will imagine, that the numerous Issue proceeding from him were so interested in the Covenant, as *Abraham* and the Faith-



ful were, neither was any thing of Duty required as a necessary Prerequisite to qualify *Abraham's* Seed for Circumcision, more than a descending lineally from him; a being his Children according to the Flesh, qualified them for, and interested them in the Blessing of the Covenant of Circumcision, which are inferior to the Blessings of the new Covenant and Gospel Ministration: So that it's evident the carnal Seed of Believers can obtain no greater Privilege, than the Seed of *Abraham* did by the Covenant of Circumcision, whose Privilege reached not to an Interest in Gospel-Blessings (or the New Covenant) unless they had obtained that Right for themselves by believing, otherwise, as one saith well, they had no more Right to them by their natural descent from *Abraham*, than *Ishmael* had in their Covenant of Peculiarity.

And as of old Circumcision was not to be administered to any but those appointed by the express Will and positive Law of God; neither ought Baptism now; nor can any man conclude from a good ground for Infant-Baptism, till as good Authority be produced for it, as they had of old for circumcising the Males of *Israel*.

You add further, *Doubtless if it had not been so, the believing Jews would have debated with the Apostles about it, &c.*

*Ans.* I confess, had they not learned better Manners, and been of much a better Temper than many in our days; they would not only have debated but quarreled with them, as some do, thrusting away Truth as a Troubler of their Coals, as the *Gadarenes* did Christ; but the Believers of old learned Christ to better ends, than to maintain unnecessary Debates with the Apostles, being satisfied from the nature of the Gospel Ministration, that there was no room for Controversies in Christ's changing the Subject as well as the Ceremony; and you may see that Point as fully decided and resolved as they did, would you rid your mind of Prejudice, and with a single Eye look into the Commission where Christ bids them to *make Disciples and baptize them*, and into the general Practice of the Apostles, which did perfectly correspond with the Command, which Command was made the Rule of their Proceedings, and not the demolish'd form of the Jewish Church: And Christ, in faithfulness to his Church, and in mercy to little Infants, hath as evidently changed the Subject as the Sign, *Mark* 16. 15, 16. which in conjunction with the general Practice of the Apostles, in that they never baptized one Infant,

puts



puts the thing out of doubt. Thus, I hope, your three topping Arguments are fully answered, which you say are equivalent to an express Command; an Assertion so impudent, that I pray God it may not be laid to your Charge; for there is not any thing said in all of them, but what may bespeak you to need, that some one teach you which be the first Principles of the Oracles of God, Hebr. 5. 12.

And now Brethren, I hope, as wise men, you will judge, and seriously consider what is said, *and the Lord give you understanding in all things*, 2 Tim. 2. 7. I now come to your Argument of lesser magnitude.

#### Fourth ARGUMENT.

*Little Children belong to the Kingdom of Heaven, therefore are of the Church, and ought not to be excluded, but admitted by Baptism, Matth. 19. 14. They, how little soever, have an interest in the Privileges of the Gospel Dispensation, as well as they had under the Law formerly, and accordingly are as capable of Eternal Blessedness in Heaven, and the same Objections lye against their being saved, as against their being baptized, viz. That they cannot actually believe, Mark 16. 16. If any object, Christ means Children in Humility, not in Age, as he doth Matth. 18. 2, 3. Answer, That cannot be so understood here; because he here speaks of such as were brought unto him, and he took into his Arms. Besides, it would not then be a sufficient ground for the check he gives his Disciples. (Objection). But he did not baptize them. Answer. We do not know that he baptized any. He did that which was greater, and that which makes them qualified Subjects for Baptism; for grant to them a Church Relation, and Baptism will follow upon it; if one stands good, the other will; and that is what we plead for from this Text.*

#### Fourth ANSWER.

That little Children, as such, belong unto the Kingdom of Heaven, we dissent not from you one jot in this Truth; for since Christ hath said, *that of such is the Kingdom of Heaven*, we joyfully and stedfastly believe the certainty of it, and that little Children are of the Church of God, *i. e. the Universal and Invisibile Church*, which contains all the Elect of God, known and unknown

known unto us, and that to the most remote Corners of the Earth, in which blessed state they abide, though their Parents may suffer a change of state by sin, yet that alters not the state of Children, nor nothing can, till by their voluntary departure from God in choosing sinful ways, they destroy themselves. To prove Infants (as such) in a visible state of Salvation, we conceive not difficult, the words of Christ strongly concluding it.

But if by Church you mean the visible Church of Christ, and do say, That because little Children are of the Kingdom of Heaven, that therefore they are of the visible Church, as that must be intended, because of your pleading for admission for them, then I conceive your Conclusion to be most untrue. (1.) Because, to say the Fleeshly Seed of Believers are born within the Pale, and Members of the Church of Christ, is a Doctrine Foreign to that of the Gospel. (2.) Because such a Doctrine, in a great measure, destroys the right end of Baptism, which is to make them Members of it, that are not, *Acts* 2. 41. and 47. and not to bring them into the Church, that are in it already. (3.) Because Infants, as such, are not capable, and fit matter to make right Members of the Church of Christ under the Gospel: For, says the Apostle writing to Church Members, *Ye also as lively Stones, are built up a Spiritual House, an holy Priesthood, to offer up Spiritual Sacrifices acceptable to God by Jesus Christ*, 1 Pet. 2. 5. which Infants can neither be nor do. (4.) To say Infants are Members of the visible Church, is incongruous to all Definitions that ever I met with of a Gospel Church, as I might shew by some of your own. I forbear to name ours, as that which may not pass with you for currant, therefore shall assign only that of the Church of England, as an Evidence against you, which speaks in the Nineteenth Article, as follows:

*The visible Church of Christ is a Congregation of faithful Men, in the which the pure Word of God is preached, and the Sacraments be duly administred according to Christ's Ordinance, in all those things that of necessity are requisite to the same.*—which strongly bespeaks the Church of Christ to be exclusive of Infants.

Further, your grant that Children before Baptism belong to the Kingdom of Heaven, doth call into question that part of the Church Catechism which teacheth her Catechumines to say,  
That

That in their Baptism they were made *Members of Christ, Children of God and Inheritors, or (Heirs) of the Kingdom of Heaven*; and if they are Members of the Church, as you confess, they belong to the Kingdom of Heaven, is not your own practice as foreign; which as, in your baptizing any, do tell the People that thereby that Child becomes a Member of the Church of God; a goodly favour you do 'em indeed by Baptism, you make them what it seems they were before, and no more by your own Grant. —

Again; That your Conclusion is not true, that faith, Because little Children are of the Kingdom of Heaven, therefore they are of the Church, and ought to be admitted by Baptism, is further evident, in that there are many that shall be saved, as have not the least shew of Right to a Place in, and to the Privileges of the Church of Christ, of which Infants are some who have not sin'd actually against the Law of Nature; and the rest are those Heathens who do live and walk up to that Light and Law of Nature which God hath placed in them, who are not blest with the Gospel Light, nor any Divine Revelation, over and above the Light of Natural Conscience: and surely some such there may be, of whom the Apostle speaks *Rom. 2. 14. who do by Nature the things contain'd in the Law*; and with reference to such, in all probability, Christ spake, saying, *Many shall come from the East, and from the West*, meaning the most remote parts of the Earth, and shall sit down with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob in the Kingdom of Heaven; but the Children of the Kingdom shall be cast out, *Matth. 8. 11, 12.* If it be granted that there may be any such, it's evident the Kingdom of Heaven will be a Receptacle for them; but who in the least can imagine that they have any right to Gospel Privileges? so that your Conclusion must needs fall. A right to Heaven from this Text is granted them, but it yields them not the least Evidence of a Right to a Church Relation and Privilege. So that I conceive all your pains in pleading from this Text vain, and in all that you have said, to be but like one that beateth the Air. A gallant Vapour, brandishing a Sword that hath no Enemy to strike at, *1 Cor. 9. 26.*

*You say the same Objections lye against their being saved, as against their being baptized, if they cannot actually believe Mark 16. 16.*

Answer; That Faith in Jesus Christ is made the Condition on which

which all Men must be saved to whom the Gospel either was, is, or ever shall be preached, is certain; yet as the Gospel never was appointed to be preached to Infants, as such, neither is it by you, nor any Man in this day; so it is not required any where of them to believe in order to their being saved. If it be, who required it? and where? And since their natural Capacities is such as renders the work of Believing impossible to them (without a Miracle) whole Faith shall save them, their immediate Parents, nay, rather the Faith of our remote Father, to wit, *Adam*; as his Unbelief at first destroyed them, so in likelihood his Faith should interest them in the Grace of Eternal Life: but we say the Faith of neither; for the Faith and Righteousness of all believing Parents in the World considered in one, will not be of Merit sufficient to save one Victim, *Ezek. 14. 14.* No, this Benefit flows purely from the Fountain of all Grace, and is conveyed to them by another Stream, to wit, God's free and full imputing the Righteousness of Christ, the second *Adam*, by whose Righteousness, Life, and Meritorious Death they are invested with a Justification unto Life Eternal, *Rom. 5. 18.* *As by the offence of one Judgment came upon all Men to Condemnation, even so by the Righteousness of one, the free Gift came upon all Men unto Justification of Life.* Were it so that the Faith of Parents did intitle their Children to Salvation, how unworthily would it reflect upon our Lord Jesus, as if he could not save Innocent Babes without their Parents believing, and strongly conclude God to be more prone to Severity than Mercy, in saving a very few, *i. e.* the Children of believing Parents, and Eternally damns all the rest from their Mothers Womb for what they could not help, *viz.* a remote Fathers sinning, and an immediate Fathers not believing; but how contrary is this to that God, whose Mercies are over all his Works, *Psal. 145. 8, 9.* So that it's evident the Salvation of dying Infants is sure, though they believe not in the sense of that Text, *Mark 16. 16.* or with that Faith which alone qualifies a Person for Baptism. So I come to your

#### Fifth ARGUMENT.

*The Children of Believers are said to be holy, this is plainly set down in the Text, which cannot be meant, are Legitimate, not Bastards, for that could not be accounted, if both the Parents had been Unbelievers,*

vers,

lievers, neither was that the Question which the Apostle here handles. Neither can it be understood absolutely of real holiness, for then Parents could convey Grace to their Children, and a gracious Man could not have graceless Children; but it must be meant of federal Holiness, as they who were born of the Jews, were Jews not common and unclean as Heathen, but accounted as in the Church, and within the Covenant, so that you that are born of Christians, are to be accounted Christians, therefore have a right to the Privileges of Christians. (2.) Scripture doth explain and confirm this, Acts 10. 15, 28. and Rom. 11. 16. if the Root be holy, so are the Branches. And it's very observable, that of the little that's spoke of the case of Children in the New Testament, all is for it, and not one word against it.

#### Fifth A N S W E R.

That the Children of Believers are holy, we believe and that their Holiness is founded upon a better Basis than the Faith of their immediate Parents; and also that it is different from that of their Parents; and such a Holiness as is so far from inrighting them to Baptism, as that till they come to sin, it doth much rather exempt them: For if Baptism be a Sign that signifies to all that submit to it, the Remission of Sins, as Scripture sufficiently shews, Acts 2. 38. and Mark 1. 4. &c. then I pray of what use can Baptism be to those who are under no actual Commiſſion of Sin, and as such, needs no sign of Remission of them.

But if with *Austin*, you say, they have Original Sin that must be waſht away by Baptism, why then their Holiness before Baptism is nothing but Uncleanness, agreeable with some of your own Comments upon *Pſalm* 51. 5. *Behold, I was shapen in iniquity, and in sin did my Mother conceive me.* So that it's plain they have no Holiness to inright them to Baptism, but rather need Baptism to make them holy.

Further, Consider how manifest a Contradiction the Patrons and Defensors of Pædo-baptism meet with from each other, not knowing where to find a stay for it's Support. How doth *Austin* thwart you; you say they that are born of Christians are to be accounted Christians, that is, they are Christians, or ought not to be so accounted. And he tells us, as my Author quotes him, in his Book *De Verb. Apost. c. 24.* — the Question being, Whether the Infants of baptized Christians were holy? he saith Not; because as the Circumcised begot only the Uncircumcised,



so neither did the baptized beget baptized, or ( holy ones ) the terms are equivalent ; the Reason he gives, None is new born before he is born. And further proves it by these two Illustrations ; (1.) That the purest Wheat that is most purged from Chaff or Husk, yet being sown, brings forth Grain that has Chaff and Husk. (2.) That the best Grapes that are sown brings forth wild Grapes. And there is reason to believe, that most of the Fathers, in this particular, was of *Austin's* mind, as might be gathered from the consent of whole Councils ; take one for all, that is, the *African Council*, where *Austin* was both Present and President ; they thus Decree :

*All that affirm young Children receive Eternal Life, albeit they be not renewed by Baptism, they are accursed, &c.*

And notwithstanding the shew of kindness you extend to Infants in your Comment upon the Text, I am perswaded you are also of *Austin's* mind ; for if I mistake not, in your second Argument, you talk as if they must be washed by Baptism ; but I tro for what, if they be not unclean, but holy.

Further, Every Holiness gives not a right to Baptism. You confess the Holiness in the Text is not a Moral or Real Holiness, which only opposes Sin, Pollution, and Uncleaness of Heart and Life ; so Holiness is proper only to the Adult. The Vessels of the Sanctuary are as expressly said to be holy, as the Children in the Text ; see 1 *Chron.* 22.19. and *Ezra* 8.28. then see how unsound you argue, saying, *The Children of Believers are holy ; Ergo, They ought to be baptized.* The Cups and Vessels of the Sanctuary are holy ; therefore they ought to be baptized. Now to every considerate Man, is not the one Conclusion as truly deducible from the quality, as the other. Who but Men willing to be deceived will conclude any more for the one then for the other ? *Austin* telling you, whatsoever this Holiness is, 1 *Cor.* 7. 14. it is not of power to make Christians, or remit Sins.

*But you proceed and say, It is not Legitimate Holiness, neither is that the Question that the Apostle here handles.*

*Answer.* Surely Sir you shoot at Rovers, and in this have spoken foolishly with your Tongue : Is not Marriage, and Matters relating thereto, the Subject of this whole Chapter ? and does the scope and design of it, bespeak the Apostle labouring the removal



removal of some Doubts and Difficulties that many were under at *Corinth*, that were turned from Idols to God, though but young and weak in the Faith; therefore they write to the Apostle for satisfaction in Matters and Things they were doubtful of. And what more plain from the manner of the Apostle's addressing himself to them in the first Verse, *Now concerning the things whereof ye write, &c.* One, amongst others of these things, we may rationally conclude was,

- Whether a Husband or a Wife, closing with Christ by Faith, and leaving their Yoke-fellow in Unbelief and Idolatry, might lawfully cleave to them, and cohabit with them, as their true and lawful Yoke-fellows, and as before they did, being both in Unbelief; or whether they must not rather leave or disown them, as to that Relation, because of the spiritual difference that is now betwixt them.

Now whether this Doubt amongst them at *Corinth* might arise upon their accidental hearing of what God made the Duty of *Israel* in the Reformation in *Ezra's* and *Nehemiah's* times, that they should put away their idolatrous Wives, as *Ezra* 10. 3. I leave.

And to the matter proposed by the *Corinthians*, the Apostle advises, That the Believer by no means shall depart, if in case the Unbelieving Party still please to abide and cohabit with them, as *vers.* 10, 11, 12, 13. And further to resolve them in this matter, he renders them a twofold Reason in the fourteenth Verse : (1.) *The unbelieving Husband is sanctified by the believing Wife, and the Unbelieving Wife is sanctified by the believing Husband.* Which is, as if he had said, You are as truly Man and Wife in God's account now as you were before ; your Marriage as honourable, your Bed as undefiled, your living and lying together as unblameable in the sight of God as ever ; the Husband and Wife as truly sanctified a Companion for each other, notwithstanding the difference between them in Matters of Religion; which the Annotator on this Text, in the Second Volume of Mr. Pool's Work, saith, *The Believer, without Offence to the Law of God, may continue in a married state with such a Yoke-fellow, notwithstanding their disposition in Matters of Faith.* And *Erasmus*, with others, tell us expressly, *That Children are legitimately holy ; agreeable with that*

in *Malachy* 2. 15. where the Lord himself calls the Children born in lawful Marriage a *godly Seed*. Therefore as a (2.) Reason, the Apostle removes the Absurdity that the scrupulous Converts at *Corinth* feared, saying, *Else were your Children unclean, but now are they holy* : i. e. Were it so as you fear, that desparity in Matters of Religion dissolved the Marriage Bond, why then your Issue would be born in Uncleanness, and bear the Blot of Bastardy upon them. But to remove this Scruple, and satisfie that there abode is as warrantable as ever, saith elsewhere, *Your Children were unclean, but now are they holy*. Now as the Husband and Wife are sanctified to each other, abiding in that honourable, or holy state of Matrimony, the Children born unto them are holy, which needs no longer to be feared by you, as Holiness and Sanctification opposeth the Uncleanness of Fornication, 1 *Thess.* 4. 3, 5.

Now I pray, Sir, if this be not the Question that the Apostle here handles, will you shew us what it is, or cease to darken Counsel by words without knowledge.

*You proceed, and must needs have this to be Federal Holiness, explaining it thus, As they that were born of the Jews, were Jews, not common and unclean as Heathen, but accounted as in the Church, so that you, that are born of Christians, are to be accounted Christians.*

*Answer.* The Heathen were bad enough, is granted, and that you need not make them worse, believing you will never be able to prove the difference so great between the Issue of Jews and Gentiles, that had an equal advantage of being born of Parents that were lawfully married, what degree of Sanctity descended upon the Jews in lawful Marriage, more then upon the Offspring of the Gentiles under the same Circumstance, I know not; and yet I believe *Israel* was a People blest with an Eminent Holiness above the Gentile Nations in common. But then, that peculiar Holiness streamed to them from another Fountain than merely being born of the Jews in holy Matrimony, to wit, the Grace and Love of God, in that he was pleased to choose them, before any other Nation, to make them his People, and accordingly blest them with holy Laws and Ordinances, as *Psalms* 147. 19, 20.

That

That every one born of Jewish Parents was a Jew, is not doubted, but that the Jews were Church Members by their Birth, is not so easie; for if they were Church Members so soon as born, they had a right (I conceive) to the Priviledges thereof. But with respect to the Passover, we are expressly told, that no uncircumcised Person shall eat thereof, *Exod. 12. 48.* And that such as are born to you *English* men, are *English* men, and so accounted, though born in *France, Spain, or Ireland*, where such born of *English* Parents, even disdain to be accounted but *English*; but that such as are born of Christians, are Christians, is a Paradox, and absurd with a witness, considering that no less then a believing the Doctrine, and an imitation of the Life and Manners of Christ, can truly denominate a Man to be a Christian. At this rate, a Man that is an Idolater begets an Idolater, and an Hypocrite begets an Hypocrite. Strange Divinity!

And as to the Text you cite, *Rom. 11. 16.* it favours not your Conclusion at all, for if by *First-fruits* and *Root*, you will understand those holy Persons *Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob*, yet its evident the whole Lump and Branches were not so, by their manifest rejecting the Lord Jesus Christ; for amongst whom did he meet with more notorious Enemies then amongst the Jews: Did their tempting, belying, betraying, accusing, condemning, and executing the Lord of Life, bespeak them to be a holy Lump, which in your sence they must be, as they proceeded from a *holy Root*, to wit, *Abraham*, notwithstanding the many Insolencies and Indignities wherewith they treated the Lord Jesus. How directly opposite is this to what Christ saith of the Jews, the natural Seed of *Abraham*, who notwithstanding that, tells them, *That they were of their Father the Devil*, John 8. 44.

But by that Scripture we may understand, that as God did look favourably on *Abraham*, the Root of that People, so also he doth favour the Branches of that whole Nation that sprang from him, and therefore as some of the Jews had received Christ, and were thereby interested in the Divine Favour, so the words rightly understood are an Incouragement to the Unbelieving Jews that stand of, to come into Christ, assuring them thereupon, that he would not reject them, but take them into his Favour, as Branches that proceeded from so holy a Root; they also contain an Argument to take off the Gentiles that were come in, from judging and censuring the Jews upon their Rejection, and being Cast off;

for

for though God in Justice hath cut off the obdurate Jew, and graciously taken in the Gentiles through believing, yet from that favour he anciently bore towards that People, he will not have the Gentiles to despise them, who is ready to receive them into favour as Branches springing from so holy a Root, if they continued not in Infidelity, which is evident in this and the following Verses; so that all the Scripture speaks of Infants right to Baptism, whether more or less, or nothing at all, it's evident you have said nothing to purpose from it. I pass to your

### Sixth ARGUMENT.

*What hinders but that the Children of professing Believers may be baptized? Nothing on God's part; who hath declared himself ready to receive them, and take them into Covenant, together with their Parents, and said, That of such is the Kingdom of Heaven; nothing in the Sacrament, they may have all that is essential unto Baptism given unto them, as well as to Adult grown Persons; nothing on the Ministers part, but they may baptize Infants as well as grown Persons; and nothing on the Childrens part, as hath been shewn; they are capable of it, and have a right unto it, as they were capable of Circumcision, and had a right to it.*

### Sixth ANSWER.

As to the first of what is contain'd in this Argument, of their being taken into Covenant, and belonging to the Kingdom of Heaven, is sufficiently spoke to already, in my Answers to your Second and Fourth Arguments: A word or two to the Quereſt, demanding what hinders. Methinks this Question is so fully resolved by the Holy Ghost in that Eighth of the *Acts*, verses 36, 37. that no thinking Man could, without blushing, have so interrogated. However, if you are willing to know, I will tell you, and amongst many things, there is one that may warrantably hinder, and that is a total want of Command from God for your Authority; could you once preface your practice with a *Thus saith the Lord*, every Mouth would be stopped; but till then, we humbly desire, *who hath required this at your hands*, it may be worthy your search; for sure that which God never had a will

to require, he will never have a heart to accept ; if things but half done in pursuance to his Command, be a rejecting his Authority, as in the Case of *Saul*, how much more a doing things in his Name to which he never directed : If the Lord delights not in the Burnt-offerings and Sacrifices he once required, comparatively to an obeying his Voice, how much less will he delight in Works of Supererogation, in things done over and above in what he hath commanded. See 1 *Sam.* 15. 22, 23. But if you assign the Commission of Christ for your warrant, is it not plain from thence, that you have broke his Law, and changed his Ordinances, and that at best you do but one thing for another, which is not one jot the better ; for this cause the Earth is defiled, and the Land mourneth ; for truly may the Lord say, as *Isaiah* 24 5. *They have transgressed my Laws, and changed my Ordinances.* Sir, That an express Command is necessary for the warranting your practice, is no more then what you have acknowledged, (*viz.* ) *That it is the Command of God only that can constitute an Ordinance of God,* which you affirm your sprinkling of Infants to be ; therefore assign your Command, as you would the Lord should not say of you, as of others in another Case, *They have done that which I commanded them not, neither came it into my heart,* Jer. 7. 31. Neither will you ever be able to quit your selves from the Guilt of Will-worship, which we justly charge upon you ; which truly defined, is, as I shall give it you from the worthy Doctor *Hopkin*, late Bishop of *London Derry*, as I find it in his Exposition upon the Ten Commandments, (worthy to be printed in Letters of Gold) page 142. who says,

*Will-worship is nothing else but an inventing and ascribing any other Worship unto God, besides what he hath been pleased to Command and Institute.* God saith, *he will not be worshipped according to our Fancies, but his own Appointment ; for as we must have no other God besides the true,* so that God must have no other Service performed unto him, besides what himself hath required and prescribed ; for this were to impute folly and weakness unto him, as if indeed he would have Servants, but knew not what Service to enjoyn them.

And by this time I hope you may see what may hinder, if not, may not I as industriously inquire why *Nadab* and *Abihu* might not bring strange Fire to the Lord's Altar, I know of no express Command of God hindering, and yet for their unadvised attempt,



tempt, the Lord sends Fire from Heaven and destroys them both, *Lev. 10. 1, 2.* Let us therefore fear to do any thing in the Worship of God which he hath not commanded, nor conclude our selves safe, though he hath not in so many exprefs words forbid it. To do what he hath commanded is our work, nor what he hath not prohibited, else where would our wild Inventions terminate.

Further, If this be not sufficient to hinder, I pray what may hinder your use of the Crofs in Baptism; Is that Ceremony any more incongruous to holy Writ then your own practice? And why find you fault with the Church of *England* for the use of their Ceremonies, whereas many of them are so indifferent in themselves, that for ought I know they may, or may not be used. Nay, if any thing can warrant you, short of a Command of God, to set up this or that in the Worship of God, as an Ordinance of God, may not the Church of *Rome* pretend to as good Authority for any part of their practice that is not in so many exprefs words forbid, especially their Baptizing with Salt and Spittle, as you can for yours. I do sincerely profess, were I satisfied that either Custom or Consequence were a warrant sufficient to bear you out in this particular, I should reckon my dissenting from the Church of *England* ( where I may be as holy as I will or can ) might be justly imputed to my Ignorance or Evilness.

You add, *Nothing in the Sacrament may hinder, they may have all that is Essential to Baptism given to them, as well as the Adult and grown Persons.*

*Answer.* Sir, It is strange that you should so thwart your own practice; for I presume there is not any whom you Baptize, but you do it upon a Profession of Faith, if not their own, yet their Parents; so that your own practice bespeaks Faith essential. And Mr. Baxter in his *Poor Man's Family Book*, pag. 168. affirmeth, *The Church never knew any Baptism, but such as was joyned with a present profession of present Faith and Repentance, and Renunciation of the Devil, the World, and the Flesh, and a total devotedness to God in Christ.* Also the Church of *England* in her Catechism, to this Question, *What is required of Persons to be baptized?* The Answer is, *Repentance, whereby they forsake sin, and Faith, whereby they stedfastly believe.* Which, with *Acts 8. 36, 37. Acts 2. 37, 38. and Rom. 6. 4.* is evident that Repentance, Faith and devotedness to God is necessary;



cessary ; but how doth it appear that Children are capable of these things ? When did any Child give you the least Evidence that he Believed, Repented, Renounced the World, the Flesh, and the Devil ? and that before he can possibly know the nature, or evil, of the one, or the other. Remember, Sir, that which appears not, is not ; nor let it suffice that the Parent believes for the Child : for I pray, why may not the Parents Baptism pass current for the Child, as the Parents Faith.

You add, *Nothing on the Minister's part, but they may Baptize Infants as well as grown Persons.*

*Answer.* I confess some Ministers by permission, and through the liberty of their own will, may do what they please ; but in that case, what they do is neither in obedience to any Command of Christ, nor in Imitation to any Example of the Apostles, who neither did, nor durst do it, but had it been in their liberty, without controversie they had done it, and then their president had been sufficient. But though *Paul* shunned not to declare unto the Elders and Churches the whole Counsel of God, *Acts* 20. 27. yet the Baptizing of Infants no where appears, to be either any part of the Lord's Counsel, or his Ministers Practice ; therefore as you would have a comfortable Evidence that you are the Lord's Minister, it becomes you publickly to enter your Protest against this practice for the undeceiving of many ; and for the future, that you presume to do nothing in his Name, but what you have his Authority for.

You say further, *There is nothing on the Childrens part, as hath been shewn, &c.*

*Answer.* As hath been shewn there is nothing on the Childrens part that renders it needful ; and as they need it not, so they have not the least appearance of right to it.

As to their Capacity, being the same with them that received Circumcision, I conceive it to be a wide mistake ; for they received both Capacity and Right for Circumcision from the words of Institution, and not because they were either able or unable immediately to answer the Obligation they were laid under by it, which was to keep the whole Law, *Gal.* 5. 3. Therefore, as your

Infants now are able to do no more then they did under the Law, and you having no Institution and Divine Authority for your warrant, bespeaks both their Incapacity and want of right; but as to your Females, I perceive they have both a larger Capacity and Propriety than those of old, in that yours must be baptized, though the others were never circumcised. I pass to your

### Seventh ARGUMENT.

*I may add, That the practice of the Church of Christ, both primitive and modern, is a good Comment on all these Texts; and though it is not the Foundation we build this Doctrine upon, yet it may help to strengthen and confirm us in the belief of it in dark and difficult Cases; especially we should have regard what hath been the Stream and Current of the godly Learned in all Ages, the way of good Men, for wise Men to walk in. Mr. Baxter saith, That for his part he cannot find in his small reading, that any one Divine, or party of Men, did certainly oppose or deny Infant Baptism for many hundred years after Christ; and adds, that you cannot prove so much as one Man, except one Herimatus, that did once oppose or deny Infant Baptism, from the Apostles days till about Luther's time; but I could quote you Justin Martyr, Origen, Jerom, Cyprian, and S. Augustine, the great Lights of the Church, all for it.*

### Seventh ANSWER.

You are pleased, I perceive, to restrain the Churches of Christ to the conventions of your own practice, and to exclude all differing with you in the point of Baptism; so that many Churches, as perspicuous as your selves, especially in a trying season, have little thanks to give you for your Charity towards them: However, since you make not the practice of preceding Churches the Basis on which you build, only call them in for Light and Evidence to help you in Cases dark and difficult, as by your own Grant, as well as Mr. Baxter's, That the Baptizing of Infants is, if it be an Ordinance at all, it is next to a Miracle, that all the famous Lights shining in the Churches, have not given so much light and clearness in this thing of so much weight and moment, but that it should still be found so dark and difficult, as it appears

to

to this day; and when a Star will arise to make it more clear than it is, I know not.

But in fine, to perswade your Brethren into a good and firm opinion of it, you tell them that you could quote *Justin Martyr*, *Origin*, *Cyprian*, *Jerom*, and *S. Augustin* all for it; to tell them you can do it is much easier than to do it: And to tell you by the way, if you have read the Fathers, you know in your Conscience, that though some baptized Infants in the Third and Fourth Centuries, for particular ends, yet none in those Ages practised Infant Baptism as a Gospel Ordinance, if any before *Austin*, as may be shewed from *Dr. Taylor's* Testimony, with others. Therefore to come to a Conclusion, though I might give Instances at large from *Tertullian*, with all, or most of those you name, together with *Nazianzene*, *Ambrose*, *Athanasius*, and many more, as they are handed to me, all bearing head strongly against your practice; yet take one for all, which sways much with me, as I find it quoted by *Mr. Baxter*, and you may read it in this order of words in his, *Saints Everlasting Rest*, pag. 143. viz.

*In the primitive times none were baptized without an express Covenanting, wherein they renounced the World, the Flesh, and the Devil, and ingage themselves to Christ, as you may see, saith he, in Tertullian, Origen, and Cyprian, and others at large.*

Now, Sir, I would ask you, whether *Mr. Baxter* never read of any that opposed Infant Baptism; whereas he tells you, That none of old were baptized without an express Covenanting. Certainly you have either mis-quoted *Mr. Baxter*, or else he greatly forgot himself when he said as you speak of him; yea, he proceeds and names *Justin Martyr* in particular in the same Book and Page, speaking of the order and manner of baptizing the Aged, and how we are dedicated to God, being renewed by Christ, saith he, we will now open unto you.

*As many as bring perswaded do believe these things to be true which we teach, and do promise to live according to them; they first learn by Prayer and Fasting to beg pardon of God for their former sins, our selves joyning also our Prayer and Fasting; then they are brought to the Water and born again (or baptized) in the same way as our selves were born again; for they are washed in water in the Name of the Father, the Lord and God of all, and of our Saviour Jesus Christ, and of the Holy Ghost. Then we bring the Person thus washed and instructed to the Brethren, as they are called, where the Assemblies are, that we may*

pray both for our selves and the illuminated Person, that we may be found by true Doctrine and by good Works worthy observers and keepers of the Commandments, and that we may obtain Eternal Salvation. Then there is brought to the chief Brother, so they called the chief Minister, Bread and a Cup of Wine, washed, which taking, he offereth Praise and Thanksgiving to the Father, by the Name of the Son and Holy Ghost; and so a while he celebrateth Thanksgiving; and after Prayer the whole Assembly saith Amen. Thanksgiving being ended, by the President or chief Guide, and the consent of the whole People, the Deacons, as we call them, do give to every one present part of the Bread and Wine, over which Thanks was given, and they also suffer them to bring it to the absent; this Food we also call the Eucharist; to which no Man is admitted but only he which believeth the truth of our Doctrine, being washed in the Laver of Regeneration for remission of sins, and that so liveth as Christ hath taught. This then, saith Mr. Baxter, is no new and over strict way, you see.

Thus I have done with your seven Arguments, believing (through the Mercy of God) might what is said be impartially considered, be sufficient to bring us to that Unity of Judgment in all the Truths of Jesus Christ, and Conformity in Practice that might render us more serviceable in carrying on that Interest in the World for our One and Only Lord, which would be mighty conduceable to his Glory, and a full Evidence, through Grace, of our own Title to that Glory which shortly will be revealed in him, unto whom be given all Glory in the Church throughout all Ages, Even so. Amen.

## AN APPENDIX.

### Seven Arguments shewing that Infants ought not to be Baptized.

#### First Argument.

**I**F Christ in the Commission Matth 28. 19. commands his Disciples to baptize none, but the very same persons he commanded them also first to teach, and make Disciples by teaching, then that place is a plain prohibition, and not a precept to baptize Infants, for Men cannot teach or disciple Infants.

But

*But Christ there commands his Disciples to baptize none but such as he commands them also, first to teach and make Disciples by teaching, therefore that place is a plain prohibition, and not at all a precept to baptize Infants.*

If it be required, we shall give you proof enough hereof out of your own Authors, as well as others.

Second Argument.

*If Infants ought to be baptized, then Infant Baptism is of Divine Institution; but Infant Baptism is not of Divine Institution, therefore they ought not to be baptized.*

The Major is true, if as you say there is but one Command for Baptism, viz *Matth. 28. 19.* which appears by the fore-going Argument to be a plain prohibition of Infant Baptism.

The Minor is true, because no Man can shew any Institution of Infant Baptism.

Third Argument.

*If Infants ought to be baptized as agreeable with the Command of Christ, then it is agreeable to the practice of the Apostolical Churches; but Infant Baptism is not agreeable to the practice of the Apostolical Churches, therefore Infants ought not to be baptized as agreeable to the Command of Christ.*

The Major is true, because the Apostolical Church did observe  
T.G. all that Christ commanded in the Case of Baptism.

The Minor is true, because no Man can shew that the Apostolical Churches did Baptize so much as one Infant.

Fourth Argument.

*If Infants ought to be Baptized, then Infant Baptism is a part of Divine Worship, either natural or positive; but Infant Baptism is no part of Divine Worship, either natural or positive, therefore they ought not to be baptized.*

The Major is true by your own grant, that Infant Baptism is an Ordinance of Christ.

The Minor appears thus; If it be any part of Natural Worship, it is to be found either among the Heathen that have not the Law, or certainly among the Patriarchs who were before the Law. —

But it hath not been known to either of them.

(2.) If

- (2) If it be a part of Positive Worship, then it becomes so by Precept and Command, but there is no Command, if there be assign it.

Note, All Commands are either Express or Implicite : An Express Command requires the performance of it ; an Implicite Command, shews that some have been commended in the practice of it, or blamed in the neglect of it ; but you can shew neither.

I shall take leave to wave a term, and so turn the edge of Mr. Baxter's Sword against you, in my fifth and sixth Arguments, which I find in his *Plain Scripture Proof*, falsely so called, p. 130.

#### Fifth Argument.

*That practice which goeth upon meer uncertainty, and hath no Scripture Rule to guide it, is not according to the will of Christ ; but the practice of baptizing Infants goes upon meer uncertainty, and hath no Rule in Scripture to guide it, therefore its not according to the will of Christ, nor ought Infants to be baptized.*

#### Sixth Argument.

*That practice which doth necessarily fill the Church with perpetual Contention, as being about a matter that cannot be determined by any known Rule, is not according to the mind of Christ : But the practice of baptizing Infants is such as will necessarily fill the Church with perpetual Contention, as that which cannot be determined by any known Rule, therefore it is not according to the mind of Christ ; nor ought Infants to be baptized.*

#### Seventh Argument.

*That practice which renders the practice of Christ, and his true Followers, who were baptized in Rivers (or much water) superfluous or ridiculous, and which agreeth not with the word Baptize, when used in the New Testament to express the act done, in that Ordinance, is contrary to the Command of Christ.*

*But the sprinkling of Infants now used by you, renders the practice of Christ, and his true Followers, who were baptized in Rivers, or much Water, superfluous or ridiculous, and agreeth not with the signification of the word Baptize, when used to express, according to the New Testament, the act done in that Ordinance ; therefore Infant Baptism is contrary to the Command of Christ, and ought not to be.*

The



The Major is true, because Christ hath Commanded nothing that reflects dishonour upon his own practice. — The  
**T.G.** Minor is true, because if Sprinkling a little Water upon the Face only be sufficient, then Immersion or Dipping in the River must needs be superfluous, &c. Neither can the word *Baptize* and *Kantise*, with any equity of Speech or good Sense, be used to express the same Action.

Now how poor and paultry soever our Arguments against your practice, as you term them, may be, I leave to consideration, judging these sufficient to justify all in refusing Infant Baptism; and if possible, to persuade you more effectually to endeavour the restoration of this Ordinance to its pristine Purity, in which you will do well: And so Farewel.

## The CONCLUSION.

*Being a Word to my Brethren of the Baptized*  
**CHURCHES.**

**I**Nto whose of your hands soever these Lines may come, with them I greet you in the Lord, through whom, from God the Father, I sincerely wish you an Increase of all Grace and Peace, praying that you may keep your selves in the love of God, and in a patient waiting for the coming of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

And that we may be without blame in that day, let us in this day, Brethren, consider our Calling, and the Obligation we are laid for ever under, by that Grace which God through Christ hath so freely and fully imparted unto us, so as that every one of us may fill up our places in the Church of God, adorning the Truth which we profess, as it is in Jesus, ordering the affairs of our whole Conversations with circumspection, expressing Piety flowing from hearts sincere towards God, and Humility, Love, and Reverence towards all Men, in all things, a defect in either of these may justly make way for a, *What do ye more then others.*

Without controverſie, if any People in the World have the true Form of Godlineſs, you have; and in holding faſt the Form of ſound words, ye do well, but better in making manifeſt the Power of

of Godliness, without which the true Form will not avail, but turn to our detriment. I design not to impeach any of you, though I would to God there were no cause; but earnestly perswade to a more compleat and constant Conformity to Christ our Head, not only in Doctrine but in Imitation, that Holiness, with the Fear and Favour of God, may fill our Assemblies and Houses to their utmost Borders, and our Hearts being fill'd with Love thereto, we may at all times, by good Conversations, shew forth our *works with meekness of Wisdom*, James 3. 13. This would certainly render Arguments for Truth more powerful and convincing; and attract and win upon the hearts of the more considerate and wise, though not one with us in holy Baptism; whereas Prophaneness, Folly, and Uncharitableness in *Israel* will disengage and harden more than a whole Volume of the most pregnant and invincible Arguments will make to yield. Therefore, Brethren, as we are called to Holiness, let us expressively evidence, that what we know of God in Christ, is more than speculative. And to that end,

(1.) Be ready unto every good Work that refers to your Duty to God, in that relation you stand in to the Church of God.

(2.) Be truly generous and wise in your deportment towards all Men, especially the more Sober and Religious; avoid Censoriousness and Unwarrantable Judging of such; treat them in love, as Brethren, and occasionally, as you have opportunity, contend earnestly for the Truth, yet without heat and passion. Maintain your Communion intire, and Separation compleat from all whose fear, more or less, in the Worship of God, is taught by the Traditions of Men, and not after the Traditions given us by Christ and his Apostles; yet in all things wherein we are agreed, let us walk, uniting in Affection, till God shall reveal the rest unto them, praying earnestly that God would cause the Beams of Gospel Light powerfully to dart into the Minds of all, helping them by Divine Illumination to discern Truth's shining Beauty and Excellency, that all Error may fall before it, as *Dagon* did before the Ark, and that none may find either heart or hand to support it, that Christ's own Fold may be filled with his own Sheep in this our day; yea, through the Increase of Knowledge and Righteousness, let Honour and Glory be given to the Lamb, and all the Earth know that the Lord alone is God. *Amen.*

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